

EXCLUSIV

Can Agnew Afford a Pal Like Sinatra?

By BETTY BEALE
Star-News Staff Writer

Washington is buzzing with this question: Will Vice President Agnew cool his friendship with Frank Sinatra as a result of the super-star's publicity in Washington last weekend?

Frank's public image here had improved a lot. The few times Washingtonians saw him over the past four years they got the impression of a good guy who made a point of keeping his generous philanthropies a secret. And then there was the high esteem in which Vice President Agnew, champion of law and order, obviously held him.

SINATRA'S MAIN guest house in his Palm Springs compound became the Agnews' western vice presidential residence. Up until recently it was called Christmas Tree House because a tree in front of it had glowed with Christmas tree lights year-round.

But recently Frank changed its name to Agnew House. He put this name on all the stationery and book matches kept in the separate six-bedroom dwelling that opens onto his tennis court and swimming pool.

The Agnews spent the Christmas holidays there when Frank's friend, Barbara Marx, gave Judy Agnew one of those very handsome silver and turquoise Indian necklaces. Such squash blossom necklaces cost anywhere from \$200 to \$400. Frank himself has always bought lots of Indian jewelry for his friends by way of helping the Indian cause.

But in Washington last weekend Sinatra tarnished his new, more reserved image by canceling out as emcee of the American Music Concert which he had

before the show, and by telling a woman columnist off in the Fairfax Hotel lobby in loud and vulgar terms.

CAN A MAN with presidential aspirations afford a pal who behaves in this manner? Jack Kennedy thought it politically wise to sever his association with Frank after he had worked hard on Kennedy's inaugural gala. And following a very unflattering Wall Street Journal article about him in 1968, Sinatra's plans to entertain at a Democratic convention tea in Chicago for Mrs. Hubert Humphrey and at a convention gala were suddenly called off.

The house Frank stayed in last week—the one he described at his New Year's Eve party as his new Washington house—bustled with activity every night. On Wednesday he and Peter Malatesta gave a party there for Vice President and Mrs. Agnew and about 30 others, mostly Agnew's office force. Every other night there were cars going to and fro at all hours. Saturday night the party in that house lasted until 6 a.m. Sunday morning.

This town didn't get back to normal until early Monday afternoon when he and Barbara Marx checked out of his Washington digs. If, as reported, Frank said at two parties before coming to Washington, "I'm going to make him (Agnew) president," he is going about it in a strange way.

* * * *

JACK IRWIN, the outgoing undersecretary of state who is about to succeed his brother-in-law, Dick Watson, as our ambassador to France, is being entertained right and left.

The cultivated, polished Jack is extremely popular because he is a lovely human being. At a dinner for him outgoing Assistant Secretary of State David Ashmore quoted from John Bunyan to describe the unruffled Irwin:

*Who would true valour see,
Let him come hither;
Here's one will constant be,
Come wind, come weather.*

At Indian Ambassador and Mrs. Jha's dinner for Irwin, both Sen. Mac Mathias and John Sherman Cooper were privately singing his praises. Both said his understated manner was no indication of a lack of firmness.